



**AUDIOLOGY PRACTICE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
October 25, 2007**

Department of Consumer Affairs
Medical Board of California
1424 Howe Avenue
Greg Gorges Conference Room "F"
Sacramento, CA 95825
(916) 263-2666

Committee Members Present

Rebecca Binge, Au.D., Chairperson
Alison Grimes, Au.D.
Naomi Smith, Au.D.

Staff Present

Annemarie Del Mugnaio, Executive Officer
Candace Raney, Staff Analyst
Lori Pinson, Staff Analyst
George Ritter, Legal Counsel

Board Members Present

Lisa O'Connor, M.A.
Jennifer Hancock, M.A.
Carol Murphy, M.A.
Paul Donald, M.D.

Board Members Absent

Diana Verdugo, M.S.

Guests Present

Robert Powell, California Speech-Language-Hearing Association
Dennis Van Vliet, Audiologist, American Academy of Audiology

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Binge called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

II. Introductions

Those present introduced themselves.

III. Approval of the Meeting Minutes for August 9, 2007 Audiology Support Personnel Task Force Meeting

The Committee reviewed the draft meeting minutes as included in the meeting packets.

M/S/C Grimes/Smith

The Committee voted to approve the August 9, 2007 Audiology Support Personnel Task Force Meeting Minutes.

IV. Update on the Audiology Support Personnel Task Force Recommendations and Regulatory Proposal [California Code of Regulations Sections 1399.154-1399.154.7]

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that the proposed regulatory amendments included in the meeting packets captured the final recommendations of the Task Force to clarify the supervision parameters and support personnel duties of the audiology aide, as opposed to creating an entirely new support personnel category. She commented that the most significant challenge in amending the existing aide provisions to provide for greater flexibility in the type or degree of supervision of the aide was that the existing statute, Business and Professions Code Section 2530.2(l), clearly defines an audiology aide as one “who works *directly* under the supervision of an audiologist.” Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that creating a list of duties or functions an audiology aide can perform under indirect or limited oversight would be in conflict with the enabling law.

Ms. Del Mugnaio referenced email communications with Mr. Ritter wherein Mr. Ritter opined that some of the audiology aide regulations, specifically those included under the existing regulatory subsection for alternative plans of supervision, were problematic in that the regulatory language, both existing and proposed, establishes duties performed by an audiology aide while under indirect supervision. He stated that there is no statutory authority to employ the use of aides under limited or indirect supervision. Mr. Ritter stated that, if the Board determines that audiology aides should be able to work independently while performing routine audiological duties, then a statutory amendment should be pursued.

Chairperson Bingea inquired about routine hearing aid repair, product testing, and cleaning, and whether those duties would be something an audiology aide should be able to perform without direct oversight.

Mr. Ritter commented that equipment manipulation or cleaning that is performed as a routine check and not as a client or patient service is not necessarily the practice of audiology and, therefore, does not need to be provided for in the aide regulations.

Ms. Grimes inquired about the newborn hearing screening automated tests and whether audiology aides should be authorized to perform the screening using preprogrammed devices without direct supervision. She stated that volunteers and other unlicensed personnel are often responsible for performing the screening in outpatient facilities.

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that the personnel standards for the newborn hearing screenings should be provided for by the Newborn Hearing Screening Program under the Department of Health Services and, therefore, is a separate governmental regulation.

Mr. Ritter advised the Board to clean up the existing regulations with respect to the alternative plan of supervision language so that the language more appropriately reflects statutory authority.

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that her understanding of the intent of the audiology aide regulations relative to the provisions for alternative plans of supervision was to allow industrial audiology

aides to conduct pure-tone air conduction threshold audiograms outside the physical presence of the supervising audiologist for industrial employment settings and was not intended to apply to other work settings.

The Committee reviewed the proposed regulatory changes and determined that the changes should clarify the definition for the supervision of an audiology aide both in terms of direct supervision, meaning on-site observation while the audiology aide is working on client-related activities, and immediate supervision for situations where the aide is providing direct patient care. The Committee also reviewed the existing provisions regarding authorizing alternate plans of supervision for audiology aides and determined that the regulations should be amended to clarify that alternative plans of supervision pertain to industrial audiology aides only.

The Committee inquired how the new changes would be disseminated to the audiology licensing population.

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that staff would develop a new Frequently Asked Questions for the Supervision of Audiology Aides to be posted on its website and included in each Audiology Aide Application packet.

M/S/C: Grimes/Smith

The Committee voted to recommend to the full Board that existing California Code of Regulations Section 1399.154 and 1399.154.2 be amended to further clarify the supervision requirements of audiology aides.

Chairperson Bingea adjourned the meeting at 3:52 p.m.